

PROACT FACT SHEET



An Environmental Resource sponsored by HQ Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence

Environmental Restoration

Introduction

In 1986, the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) established the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP), Title 10 United States Code § 2701 *et seq.*, to address environmental contamination or other environmental damages at facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense (DoD). DERP has three major categories and goals:

- *Installation Restoration Program (IRP)* - the identification, investigation, research and development, and cleanup of contamination from hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants.
- *Other Environmental Damage* - correction of other environmental damage, such as ordnance and explosive wastes, posing an imminent and substantial danger to the public or the environment.
- *Building Demolition/Debris Removal* - the demolition and removal of unsafe buildings and structures, including such items at formerly used defense sites (FUDS).

The Restoration Process

Environmental restoration actions and activities conducted while implementing the program are mandated to be carried out in a manner consistent with regulations set forth for Federal facilities in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), Title 42 United States Code § 9601 *et seq.* However, other statutes such as the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Title 42 United States Code § 6901 *et seq.*, also provide guidance on environmental cleanup.

- CERCLA governs environmental restoration activities at national priorities list (NPL) and non-NPL sites in accordance with the National

Contingency Plan. The National Contingency Plan provides the organizational structure and procedures for, preparing for and responding to, discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants.

- RCRA governs certain contaminated site cleanup under its corrective action program, which are primarily permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage, or disposal (TSD) facilities.

CERCLA Cleanup

The CERCLA environmental cleanup process prescribes investigation and restoration activities be conducted through a phased approach. At certain points in the process, the governing agencies may determine no further action is required and screen the site out of the process. Alternatively, a site posing an immediate health or environment threat may require emergency response actions. For most sites, those that are not screened out nor "emergencies," the primary phases of the CERCLA remedial action process are:

- *Site Discovery* - occurs through various means, including reports of releases, property assessments and surveys, or incidental discoveries.
- *Preliminary Assessment/Site Investigation* - consists of several steps including a preliminary assessment, site inspection, assessment of the site's relative risk, and removal actions if necessary to mitigate immediate environmental threats.
- *Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study* - fully characterizes the nature and extent of contamination to select the appropriate remedial option, develop a proposed remedial plan, and execute the Record of Decision (ROD).
- *Remedial Design/Remedial Action* - site remedy as selected in the ROD is designed, pilot tested, constructed, and implemented. In addition, long-term operation, maintenance, and monitoring may be established.

DoD Policy and Guidance

DoD Instruction (DoDI) 4715.7, "Environmental Restoration Program," 22 April 1996 sets DoD policy on implementing DERP. The instruction assigns

responsibilities and establishes requirements for evaluating contaminated sites for the environmental restoration program. In addition, DoD has substantially revised and reissued on 28 September 2001, "Management Guidance for the Defense Environmental Restoration Program." The revised guidance contains and establishes requirements for response actions to address military munitions, clarifies reporting of environmental liabilities, and discusses changes in how funds for environmental restoration projects are classified.

DoD is committed to the cleanup of contaminated soils, groundwater and surface waters, and restoring natural resources at military installations in the United States and its territories; and has devoted a major effort toward informing and enlisting public participation in the cleanup process through Restoration Advisory Boards.

The AF Program

Air Force environmental restoration procedures are outlined in Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7010, "Environmental Restoration Program," 7 February 2001. This AFI implements established DoD guidance for complying with DERP and provides guidance on identifying, investigating, and cleanup of contaminated sites associated with past Air Force activities.

Restoration Support

The Air Force emphasizes a "risk plus other factors" methodology in determining site priorities, and implementing effective and efficient cleanup technologies. The Environmental Restoration Directorate, Headquarters Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (HQ AFCEE/ER) provides a full range of environmental remediation capabilities to assist restoration site managers. The directorate provides world-class remediation technology and the support needed to implement it. The directorate also has consultant capabilities providing technical oversight for environmental cleanup activities. General information about the ER Directorate can be obtained by visiting <http://www.afcee.brooks.af.mil/products//rpo/default.asp>.

For More Information...

Contact PROACT at DSN 240-4215 or (800) 233-4356, or the ER Directorate, DSN 240-3383, (210) 536-3383, or <http://www.afcee.brooks.af.mil/pro-act/>.

- Environmental Restoration Branch, Office of the Civil Engineer, Headquarters United States Air Force (USAF/ILEV), <https://www.il.hq.af.mil/ile/ilev/ilevr.cfm>.
- Environmental Cleanup, Department of Defense, <http://www.dtic.mil/envirodod/>.
- Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office, Environmental Protection Agency, <http://www.epa.gov/swerffir>.

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